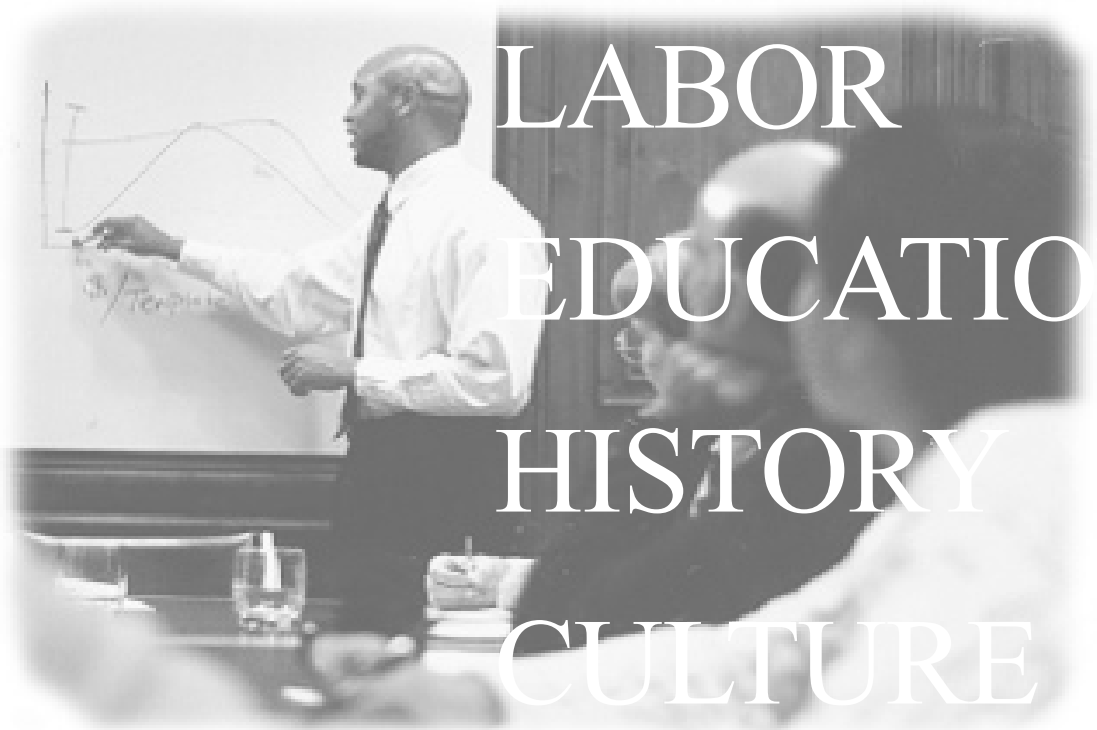


RAPIDES



PARISH

“...the health of a community is a shared responsibility of many entities, organizations and interests in the community, including health services delivery organizations, public health agencies, other public and private entities and the people of a community.”

– Institute of Medicine. 1996. *Healthy Communities: New Partnerships for the Future of Public Health*. National Academy Press. p. 12


**RAPIDES
PARISH**

Rapides Parish

**Alexandria/Pineville
Area Convention and
Visitors Bureau**

Alexandria Mall
3437 Masonic Dr.
Alexandria, LA 71301
318-443-7049
800-742-7049

**Regional Office of
Public Health**

John Naponick, M.D.
Regional Administrator
Central Regional office
1500 Lee St.
Alexandria, LA 71301

Mailing address:

P.O. Box 8199
Alexandria, LA 71306-
1199
318-487-5262
318-487-5338 fax

History¹

Created on March 31, 1807, Rapides gets its name from a ledge of limestone which formerly crossed the Red River just above Alexandria, forming a rapids. In the center of Louisiana, and one of the largest parishes, St. Denis established in 1700 one of the earliest trading posts in the Louisiana Territory on the present site of Pineville. Later it became a French outpost, because the river was claimed by the Spanish as the boundary between Mexico and French Louisiana.

Today the parish is one of the seven metropolitan statistical areas in the state. The Louisiana Seminary of Learning, established in 1860, later became Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. The parish claims the first railroad west of the Mississippi River, built from Alexandria to Lecompte in 1837.

Culture and Recreation³

More so than any other section of the state, the Crossroads has a pivotal hub which is the uncontested center of things; Alexandria/Pineville. This area, along with the surrounding towns and communities, makes up the Crossroads. While Louisiana is a land of infinite variety, nowhere is this more evident than at the Crossroads. Here you will find the hills and the bayous, the prairies and the rich Red River delta, each with its own history and traditions. At the Crossroads, visitors can enjoy recreation areas beyond compare, opportunities for water sports, fishing, hunting, camping spots, fine restaurants, hotels, motels, and multiple other attractions.



Parish Seat¹ Alexandria¹

Major Cities (over 5,000 population)²

Alexandria	
1990	49,188
1997 (estimate)	50,726
Pineville	
1990	12,251
1997 (estimate)	15,158

Parish Population²

1990	131,556
1997 (estimate)	127,855

RAPIDES
PARISHBreakdown of 1996 population (estimates)⁶

White	69%
African American	30%
Other	1%
Male	48%
Female	52%
Population age 0-4	7%
Populations age 65 & over	13%

Geography and Statistics²

Average elevation	82 ft.
Land area in square miles	1,322.7
Water area in square miles ⁴	39.4

Climate²

Average temperatures

Annual	67°
January	48°
July	82°
Annual average rainfall	60.4 in.

Labor Force (1995)¹

Civilian	58,500
Employed	54,600
Unemployed	3,900
Unemployment	6.6%

Agriculture¹

Cotton, corn, sugarcane, soybeans, timber and vegetable farming; diversified manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade.

Colleges/Universities²

(within one hour commute)

Pineville

Louisiana College

Alexandria

Louisiana State University

Northwestern State University

Public Libraries⁵ 10

Educational Attainment (1990)⁷

Less than 5th grade	4.9%
High school graduate or higher	69.0%
Some college or higher	36.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	14.6%

Major Employers (Products) and Number of Employees²**Private Employers**

Rapides Regional Medical Center (Medical)	1,675
St. Francis Cabrini Hospital (Medical)	1,000
Martin Lumber (Forest Products)	970

Public Employers

Rapides Parish School Board (Education)	3,400
Pinecrest State School (Special Education)	1,800
Veterans Administration Hospital (Medical)	950

Poverty and Income

Persons in poverty (1995) ⁷	22.1%
Children under age 18 in poverty ⁷	32.8%
Per capita income (1996) ⁸	\$19,656


**RAPIDES
PARISH**

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- ⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1998. Population Estimates. 1998. keywords: parish name <http://www.census.gov/datamap/www/22.html>
- ⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1998. keywords: people, poverty, small area income and poverty estimates <http://www.census.gov>
- ⁸ U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. 1999. keywords: economics and statistical administration <http://www.doc.gov>



Region 7

Bienville
Bossier
Caddo
Claiborne
DeSoto
Natchitoches
Red River
Sabine
Webster

Region 8

Caldwell
East Carroll
Franklin
Jackson
Lincoln
Madison
Morehouse
Ouachita
Richland
Tensas
Union
West Carroll

Region 9

Livingston
St. Helena
St. Tammany
Tangipahoa
Washington

Region 1

Jefferson
Orleans
Plaquemines
St. Bernard

Region 2

Ascension
East Baton Rouge
East Feliciana
Iberville
Pointe Coupee
West Baton Rouge
West Feliciana

Region 3

Assumption
Lafourche
St. Charles
St. James
St. John
St. Mary
Terrebonne

Region 4

Acadia
Evangeline
Iberia
Lafayette
St. Landry
St. Martin
Vermilion

Region 5

Allen
Beauregard
Calcasieu
Cameron
Jefferson Davis

Region 6

Avoyelles
Catahoula
Concordia
Grant
LaSalle
Rapides
Vernon
Winn